

Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 /064 W

----- 065329

O R 261620Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1796

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION USNATO

DIA WASHDC

AMCONSUL MILAN

AMCONSUL NAPLES

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E.O. 11652: DECONTROL AFTER ONE YEAR

TAGS: PINT, IT, ELAB

SUBJECT: LABOR UNITY AND THE POLITICAL CRISIS

1. THE BASIC CAUSE OF TENSIONS WITHIN THE ITALIAN LABOR MOVEMENT IS THE DEBATE OVER THE PLAN FOR CISL (FORMERLY DC ASSOCIATED), UIL (FORMERLY PSDI, PRI AND PSI ASSOCIATED) AND CGIL (COMMUNIST) TO MERGE INTO A SINGLE LABOR FEDERATION. THE MAJORITY LABOR VIEWS HOLDS THAT MERGER IS VITAL FOR THE CONSOLIDATION OF LABOR FORCES IN DEALING WITH THE COUNTRY'S PROBLEMS. IN VIEW OF THE MINORITY, THAT IS THE MINORITY IN CISL AND THE MAJORITY IN UIL, MERGER IS TANTAMOUNT TO CEDING CONTROL OF THE ITALIAN LABOR MOVEMENT TO THE COMMUNISTS. THIS IS BECAUSE THE CGIL HAD MORE MEMBERS THAN CISL AND UIL COMBINED. CURRENT CLAIMED MEMBERSHIP OF CGIL IS 3,877,000; CISL, 2,472,000 AND UIL, 1,050,000. MERGER IS ALSO WIDELY REGARDED AS AN IMPORTANT ASPECT IN THE COMMUNIST STRATEGY TO

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ASSUME CONTROL OF THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT. THE COMMUNISTS IN

THE LABOR MOVEMENT APPEAR PREPARED TO SUBORDINATE ALL OTHER CONSIDERATIONS TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THIS OBJECTIVE.

2. CISL SECRETARY GENERAL BRUNO STORTI HAS BEEN LEADING THAT ORGANIZATION TOWARD MERGER SINCE EARLY 1971. OPPOSITION HAS BEEN LED BY HIS FORMER ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL VITO SCALIA, WHO IS CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH POLITICAL FORCES WITHIN THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY. IN UIL SECRETARY GENERAL RAFAEL VANNI HAS LONG AND SUCCESSFULLY STEERED A DIFFICULT COURSE, PROCLAIMING ALLEGIANCE TO THE PRINCIPLE OF UNITY WHILE RESISTING ITS FULL IMPLEMENTATION. VANNI HAS BEEN ABLE TO COUNT ON THE SUPPORT OF REPUBLICANS AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATS WITHIN HIS ORGANIZATION AS WELL AS SOME AUTONOMOUS SOCIALISTS.

3. RESPONDING TO THE DEMANDS OF YOUNGER WORKERS AND STUDENTS BEGINNING WITH THE SO CALLED HOT AUTUMN OF 1969, THE UNIONS HAVE ESPOUSED THE PRINCIPLE OF AUTONOMY FROM POLITICAL CONTROL AND UNION LEADERS HAVE HAD TO CHOOSE BETWEEN EXERCISING EITHER LABOR OR POLITICAL FUNCTIONS. AS THE UNIONS HAVE DISASSOCIATED FROM PARTY CONTROL, THEY HAVE ASSERTED DIRECT POLITICAL INFLUENCE ON THE GOVERNMENTAL PROCESS. THEY HAVE PRESSURED SUCCESSIVE GOVERNMENTS FOR POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC REFORMS WITHOUT ASSUMING RESPONSIBILITY FOR POLICY IMPLEMENTATION. THE UNIONS HAVE IN THIS RESPECT NOT LIMITED THEMSELVES TO WAGES, HOURS AND OTHER WORK CONDITIONS BUT HAVE RATHER CALLED FOR BROAD BASIC REFORMS AFFECTING ALL SECTORS OF ITALIAN SOCIETY. THEY HAVE URGED, FOR EXAMPLE, REFORM OF THE CIVIL SERVICE, MODERNIZATION OF STATE OWNED ENTERPRISES, EXPANSION OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION, DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW ENERGY POLICY, RENEWAL OF AGRICULTURE, EXPANSION OF PUBLIC HOUSING, AND RENEWED EFFORTS FOR DEVELOPING THE SOUTH. THE UNIONS HAVE, HOWEVER, BEEN DISILLUSIONED BY THE RESPONSE TO THEIR EFFORTS. PROMISED REFORMS HAVE MORE USUALLY THAN NOT LAPSED WITH EACH CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT. THE PCI, ON THE OTHER HAND HAS CONSISTENTLY ADAPTED ITS PLATFORM TO THE REFORMS WHICH HAVE BEEN SPONSORED BY THE UNIONS.

4. MODERATE FORCES WITHIN THE CISL MINORITY AND THE UIL MAJORITY ARE SEEKING TO POSTPONE HASTY ACTION ON THE UNITY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ISSUE. THEY SEE THE DANGER THAT A PRECIPITOUS SPLIT OF CISL WOULD WEAKEN THAT ORGANIZATION WITHOUT BLOCKING UNITY. THE BEST HOPE AS THEY SEE IT IS THAT THE DC, PSDI, PRI, AND PLI CAN SOMEHOW COMBINE FORCES IN A PROGRAM WHICH WOULD BE RESPONSIVE TO UNION AND ELECTORATE DEMANDS FOR REFORM. VOLPE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LABOR RELATIONS, POLITICAL SITUATION, POLITICAL PARTIES, COMMUNISTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 JUN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975ROME09232
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750222-0390
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750613/aaaaalmi.tel
Line Count: 112
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <22 APR 2003 by ElyME>; APPROVED <26 SEP 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LABOR UNITY AND THE POLITICAL CRISIS
TAGS: PINT, ELAB, IT, UIL
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006